**Political Science 500.**
**Social Scientific Thinking**

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| Fall, 2011 | Rick K. Wilson |
| W 9-12 | HZ 118, x3352 |

## Course Description

In this course and the research practicum offered next semester you will begin to learn how to conduct basic research in social science. I will focus on the issues of theory construction, research design, and measurement, as well as how best to communicate your research to the scholarly community. The goal is that by the end of the year you should be able to design and conduct a variety of research projects, to read the professional literature competently, and to pass the "basic tools" exam.

## Overview of Your Obligations

This is a seminar. You are expected to have read all of the assigned readings before the beginning of the seminar and, thus, be able to participate in class discussions. Each student will be an active participant in the seminar. I cannot overemphasize the importance of consistent and meaningful seminar participation. You may hate speaking up (or somehow think that whatever you have to say is silly), but you are entering into a profession where being able to articulate an idea is crucial. The seminar is a good place to develop and hone your skills.

Throughout the semester you will have written assignments. The nature of the written work will vary as to the topic under discussion changes. These papers are due via email (rkw@rice.edu) by 11:59 a.m. on Tuesday. Unless you have a verified excuse, papers arriving after the deadline will not be regarded with ill humor and may not be credited.

You will be required to make presentations to the class. Sometimes, but not always, these presentations will be based on your written work. Presentations are different from normal class participation. You will be told about presentations ahead of time.

## Components of Your Final Grade

Class participation 20%
Written assignments 30%
Presentations 20%
Final Project 30%

## Texts

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. [KKV]

Elster, John. 2007. *Explaining Social Behavior: More Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences*. Cambridge University Press.

Poteete, Amy, Marco Janssen, **Elinor Ostrom.** 2010. *Working Together: Collective Action, the Commons, and Multiple Methods in Practice*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press.

Heinrich, Bernd. 1989. *Ravens in Winter*. Vintage Books.

**Reading Assignments.**

The course syllabus is a work in progress. Please note that I reserve the right to add or delete readings as the semester progresses. Readings that are not otherwise easily available (e.g., via the library's online resources) will be located somewhere in Herzstein. You are responsible for finding and retrieving materials that are online.

**Cooperating on Assignments**.

In this class there may be group assignments in which you may divide up the tasks in the assignment in any way you wish. All members of the group will receive the same grade on these assignments. On all other assignments I expect each student to work independently.

**Honor Code.**

Rice has an Honor System. The Honor System places a great deal of trust -- but also responsibility -- on the student. All graded work in this course is covered by the Honor System. In each case I will explain what limitations and restrictions you should observe.

**Special Needs**

Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to contact me as soon as possible, preferably during the first two weeks of class. All discussions will remain confidential. Students with disabilities need to also also contact Rice Disability Support Services in room 122 of the Ley Student Center [713-348-]5841; adarice at rice dot edu). Fax: (713) 348 - 5199. If calling from a TTY/TDD, dial 711 or 800-735-2989 to be connected through a relay operator.

**Key Dates**

September 20 – turn in your research paper statement
October 11 – Literature review and hypotheses
November 1 – Research Design
November 30 – Class presentations of research paper (initial draft given to class on Nov. 29)
December 14 – Final draft of research paper

## Course Plan.

### I. Social Scientific Contributions

### A. What's Political Science? (August 24)

What better way to learn about political science than to read what past President's of the American Political Science Association think about the future of political science?

Read the following three presidential addresses:

Brady, Henry E. 2011. "The Art of Political Science: Spatial Diagrams as Iconic and Revelatory" *Perspectives on Politics.* 9 (2): 311-331.

Ostrom E. 1998. "A Behavioral Approach to the Rational Choice Theory of Collective Action." *American Political Science Review* 92: 1-22.

Riker, William H. 1984. "The Heresthetics of Constitution-Making: The Presidency in 1787, with Comments on Determinism and Rational Choice." *American Political Science Review* 78 (1): 1-16

I want you to write a memo to me. It should be no more than 2 pages, single spaced. In your memo I would like you to address the following three points:

a. What is the point to each Presidential address (no more than two sentences for each)?
b. What do they suggest that ties the discipline together?
c. What one thing that was written excites you about the future of political science?

### B. Social Science Contributions (August 31)

KKV. Chapter 1.

Poteete et al. 2010. *Working Together: Collective Action, the Commons, and Multiple Methods in Practice*. Introduction and Chapter 1.

Lave, Charles and James March. 1975. *An Introduction to Models in the Social Sciences*. Lanham, MD. University Press of America. Chapters 1 & 2; read the problems and think about them.

Cowl, Clayton et al. 1998. "Factors Associated with Fatalities and Injuries from Hot-Air Balloon Crashes," Journal of the American Medical Association, 279 (13): 1011-1014.

Orme-Johnson, David W., Charles N. Alexander, John L. Davies, Howard M. Chandler, and Wallace E. Larimore 1988. "International Peace Project in the Middle East: The Effects of the Maharishi Technology of the Unified Field " *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 32 (4): 776-812.

**C. Social Science Theory (September 7)**

KKV, Chapter 2

Elster, Jon. 2007. *Explaining Social Behavior* Cambridge University Press. Introduction, and Chapters 1-3.

Schrodt, Phillip A. 2006. "Beyond the Linear Frequentist Orthodoxy" *Political Analysis*. 14(3): 335-339.

Alford, John R. and John Hibbing. 2008. "The New Empirical Biopolitics" *Annual Review of Political Science* 11: 183-203.

Iverson, Torben and David Soskice. 2006. "New Macroeconomics and Political Science." *Annual Review of Political Science*. 9: 425-453.

**C. Clarifying Causal Mechanisms (September 14)**

KKV. Chapter 3

Cook, Thomas D. and Donald T. Campbell. 1979. *Quasi-experimentation : design & analysis issues for field settings.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin. Chapter 1 pp. 1-36

Gerring, John and Rose McDermott. 2007. "An Experimental Template for Case Study Research." *American Journal of Political Science*. 51 (3): 688-701.

Imai, Kosuke, Luke Keele, Dustin Tingley, Teppei Yamamoto (Forthcoming) "Unpacking the Black Box of Causality: Learning about Causal Mechanisms from Experimental and Observational Studies" *American Political Science Review*.

Habyarimana, James, Macartan Humphreys, Daniel N. Posner, and Jeremy M. Weinstein. 2007. "Why Does Ethnic Diversity Undermine Public Goods Provision?" *American Political Science Review* 101 (4):709-25.

Kocher, Matthew Adam., Thomas B. Pepinsky and Stathis N. Kalyvas. 2011. "Aerial Bombing and Counterinsurgency in the Vietnam War." *American Journal of Political Science.* 55 (2): 201-218.

## II. Writing a Research Paper

### A. Motivating a Paper. (September 21)

Stevenson, Randy. nd. Motivating Your Project: Writing an Introduction and/or Literature Review.

Leeds, Ashley. nd. Writing a Research Paper for a Graduate Seminar in Political Science.

Thompson, William. 1999. "The young person's guide to writing economic theory", Journal of Economic Literature, 37: 157-183.

Pape, Robert. 2003. The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism. American Political Science Review 97, 3: 343-361.

Damasio, Antonio. 1994. Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason and the Human Brain. New York: Avon Books. Chapters 1 and 2.

### B. Motivating a Paper and Providing a Literature Review. (September 26)

Knopf, Jeffrey W. 2006. "Doing a Literature Review." *PS: Political Science* 39 (1): 127-132.

Munger, Michael. 2010. "10 Tips on How to Write Less Badly" Chronicle of Higher Education. http://chronicle.com/article/10-Tips-on-How-to-Write-Les/124268/

Wolfinger, Raymond E. 1993. "Tips for Writing Papers." *PS: Political Science*. 26 (1): 87-88

Mearsheimer, John and Stephen Walt. 2006. The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy. John F. Kennedy School of Government. Faculty Research Working Paper Series. Working Paper Number: RWP06-011. (Owlspace Resources)

Anonymous. "The Emotional Substrates of White Racial Attitudes" 2011

Anonymous. "Interventions into Countries at Risk of Civil War." 2011

### C. Hypotheses (October 5)

Heinrich, Bernd. 1989. Ravens in Winter.

**D. Basics of Research Design (October 12)**

KKV, Chapter 4.

Macartan Humphreys and Jeremy M. Weinstein. 2009. "Field Experiments and the Political Economy of Development" *Annual Review of Political Science* 12: 367–378

Eline A. de Rooij, Donald P. Green, and Alan S. Gerber. 2009. "Field Experiments on Political Behavior and Collective Action" *Annual Review of Political Science* 12: 389–395

Achen, Christopher. 2002. "Toward a New Political Methodology: Microfoundations and ART" *Annual Review of Political Science* 5: 423-450.

**E. Case Selection. (October 19)**

KKV, Chapter 6.

Poteete et al. 2010. *Working Together: Collective Action, the Commons, and Multiple Methods in Practice*. Chapters 2 and 3.

Lieberman, Evan S. 2010. "Bridging the Qualitative-Quantitative Divide: Best Practices in the Development of Historically Oriented Replication Databases" *Annual Review of Political Science*. 13: 37-59.

Geddes, Barbara. 1990. How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics. *Political Analysis* 2: 131-150.

**G. Measurement Issues. (October 26)**

Thunder, David. 2004. "Back to Basics: Twelve Rules for Writing a Publishable Article." *PS: Political Science*. 37 (3): 493-495.

KKV, Chapter 5.

Poteete et al. 2010. *Working Together: Collective Action, the Commons, and Multiple Methods in Practice*. Chapter 4 and 5.

Goldstein, Kenneth and Travis N. Ridout. 2004. "Measuring the Effect of Televised Political Advertising in the United States." *Annual Review of Political Science* 7: 205-226.

Ross, Michael. 2006. "A Closer Look at Oil, Diamonds and Civil War." *Annual Review of Political Science* 9: 265-300.

**H. Data Collection. (Nov. 2)**

Kennedy, Peter E. "Sinning in the Basement: What are the Rules? The Ten Commandments of Applied Econometrics." *Journal of Economic Surveys* 16 (4): 569-589.

Poteete et al. 2010. *Working Together: Collective Action, the Commons, and Multiple Methods in Practice*. Chapters 6-8.

Johnson, Martin, W. Phillips Shively, and Robert Stein. 2002. Contextual Data and the Study of Elections and Voting Behavior: Connecting Individuals to Environments. Electoral Studies 21,2: 219-233.

Zaller, John and Stanley Feldman. 1992. A Simple Theory of the Survey Response: Answering Questions Versus Revealing Preferences. American Journal of Political Science 36,3: 579-616.

Palmer, Glenn and Faten Ghosn. 2003. Codebook for the Militarized Interstate Incident Data, Version 3.0. Correlates of War Project. The Pennsylvania State University. Click on Available Datasets. Click on Militarized Interstate Disputes (v3.1). Click on Codebook for MID Incident Data.pdf.

Wedeen, Lisa. 2010. "Reflections on Ethnographic Work in Political Science." *Annual Review of Political Science* 13: 255-273.

**III. Varieties of Social Science Theories**

**A. "The Mind" (November 9)**

Elster, Jon. 2007. *Explaining Social Behavior*. Cambridge, UK. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 4-8.

Clark, A.E., Frijters, P., Shields, M.A. 2008. Relative Income, Happiness, and Utility: An Explanation for the Easterlin Paradox and Other Puzzles. *Journal of Economic Literature* 46: 95-144

**B. "Action" (November 16)**

Elster, Jon. 2007. *Explaining Social Behavior*. Cambridge, UK. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 9-14.

Brennan, Geoffrey. 2008. "Homo economicus and homo politicus: an introduction." *Public Choice* 137: 429–438.

Hardin, Russell. 2008. "Are homo economicus and homo politicus identical twins?" *Public Choice* 137: 463-468.

Munger, Michael. 2008. "Economic choice, political decision and the problem of limits. " *Public Choice* 137: 507-522.

**C. Lessons from the Natural Sciences and Interaction (November 23)**

Elster, Jon. 2007. Explaining Social Behavior. Cambridge, UK. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 15-26.

Axelrod, Robert. 2008. "Political Science and Beyond: The Presidential Address to the American Political Science Association" *Perspectives on Politics.* 6 (1): 3-9.

Poteete et al. 2010. *Working Together: Collective Action, the Commons, and Multiple Methods in Practice*. Chapters 9 and 10.

**IV. Class Presentations (November 30)**